1:Haskins K-4,5 (1952-1954)1956 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11

233 On the other
556 hand, ranching is a prestige activity; the rancher almost invariably is
311 an influential and relatively wealthy member of the local community. As such, he may command for grazing purposes land which would be more profitable to the owner and to the whole economy if it were under cultivation.

231 Livestock Production. The large livestock animals which are important to the Recôncavo—cattle, asses, mules, horses, sheep, and goats--are primarily the products of ranching enterprises, i.e., livestock fazendas. Many of these animals are bred in the Sertão west and northwest of the Recôncavo and brought into the region as young stock ready for use as labor animals, as milk producers, or as mature animals ready for fattening and slaughter. However, there is some basic livestock production within the Recôncavo, especially in the outer ring of municípios. Here livestock are raised under conditions basically similar to those of the Sertão.

233 The cattle fazenda is a grazing enterprise in which the reproduction of the herd is uncontrolled; there is no selective breeding. Vaqueiros (cowboys) are employed to hold and to move the herds over vast distances. From time to time the young bulls are emasculated, and [232] as they approach maturity, these oxen are usually driven to the Recôncavo. The remaining cattle are held until maturity and then driven across the Sertão to Feira de Santana. The characteristic cattle fazenda exists in a modified form in the Recôncavo. Since the land for grazing is more restricted, the herds are smaller, and sometimes the grazing area is fenced. Second growth is the basic forage, though, as has been seen, grass here plays a relatively more important [232] role than in the Sertão. There have been a few attempts to breed selectively in the Recôncavo.

1:Haskins K-4,5 (1952-1954)1956 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11

231 The production of asses, mules, and horses is concentrated outside the Recôncavo. Apparently most of the work animals used in the Recôncavo--oxen as well as asses, mules, and horses--were born on the Sertão and were the products of the same ranches which produce beef animals.

In distinction to these larger animals, swine are produced in large number within the Recôncavo. Moreover, they are almost exclusively the products of small enterprises--pigs are raised in ones and twos by small farmers. They eat the household waste and root in the abandoned [443] fields and the second growth. When they are mature or when the need for cash is pressing, they are sold in the local market, either alive or slaughtered.

Most of the livestock of the Recôncavo are descendent from animals introduced into the Northeast during colonial times. In general [232] there has been little deliberate selection of strains--those animals which have survived disease, insect pests, prolonged semi-starvation, and casual abuse have conferred their characteristics upon the present generation. Thus, most of the livestock are scrubby and inbred, inefficient producers of meat, milk, or energy.

Cattle. The total cattle population of the Recôncavo was 395,000 head in 1948, and the number was still growing. There were [433] almost three times as many cattle in the region as swine, the next most numerous animal, and the value of cattle production far exceeded that of other livestock.

Almost all of the cattle of the Recôncavo are of the unspecialized and ubiquitous Indo-Brazilian strain--rangy animals with long horns and a moderate hump, hardy and strong but not producers of large quantities of either meat or milk. Oxen of the same breed are important in [234] the sugar zone and in Feira de Santana, and both beef and milk cattle

1:Haskins K-4,5 (1952-1954)1956 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11

244 249 231 233 [423] [311] the tobacco-manioc region is an area of co-existing crop and livestock production. The mean size of mixed units of both the tobacco-manioc region and the western and northern perimeter of the Recôncavo was small—20 to 40 hectares—but was significantly larger than the mean size of crop farms in the same areas (Map 101). Like the purely cane-producing plantations, the mixed units of the Central Recôncavo were relatively large.

241 231 232 311 Crop Cultivation and Mixed Crop Cultivation and Livestock Producing Units Combined. The distribution of the area in crop and crop-livestock units combined, as shown on Maps 102 and 103, reaffirms the regional distinctiveness of the Recôncavo. In almost the entire region over one-half the total area was in these two types of crop-producing properties. None of the adjoining municípios had as much as 50 per cent of their total area in these two types of units, and in all but three, less than one-third the land was in crop or crop-livestock properties.

241 311 184 [231] [233] Regional Pattern of Agricultural Properties. The distribution of the three major production units is summarized on Map 104. In each of the two basic regions—crop and crop-livestock—one production type dominated, in number and in area, over the others. The Central Recôncavo with the island of Itaparica and, beyond the Recôncavo, the environs of Nazaré composed a region in which most of the agricultural land was in crop cultivation units. North of the Bay, most of these crop cultivation units were sugar cane plantations. On Itaparica there were several kinds of crop cultivation units—coconut plantations, diminutive manioc farms, and across from Salvador, small summer estates with a few cultivated fields. Around Nazaré most of the crop cultivation properties appeared to specialize in the production of manioc.